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*A new exposition of project teaching.*—The four or five books which have so far appeared on the project method of teaching have each left us hoping for a more concrete or a more systematic treatment. Professor Stevenson's new book<sup>1</sup> is a decided step toward such an end, for it is both well organized and replete with illustrations. Beginning with a careful exposition of his interpretation of the project, Mr. Stevenson goes on to contrast this with the more common types of teaching, to compare his own definition with many others that have been proposed, to contrast projects with problems, to work out some of the psychological implications of the project, to show what the project means for the curriculum, and then to give numerous examples of project teaching in colleges, high schools, and elementary schools. The contrasts between project teaching and each of the older types of teaching, together with the numerous illustrations of projects and near projects in various schools, ought to help in clearing up the very prevalent confusion as to just what is and what is not a project. One who has attempted to get project teaching demonstrated for students will realize how little the teacher is affected by one's giving abstract definitions, and how very far even good teachers usually are from seeing what this new movement is all about.

A project is here defined as a problematic act carried to completion in its natural setting.

In this definition it is to be noted that: (a) there is implied an act carried to completion as over against the passive absorption of information; (b) there is insistence upon the problematic situation demanding reasoning rather than merely the memorizing of information; (c) by emphasizing the problematic aspect the priority of the problem over the statement of principles is clearly implied; and (d) the natural setting of problems as contrasted with an artificial setting is explicitly stated [p. 43].

The term "problem" is largely intellectualistic in its connotation, and if it were used exclusively it would have a tendency to overemphasize the intellectualistic aspect of school work. The project, on the other hand, lays emphasis not only on the problematic situation but also on the possibility of carrying it to completion [p. 94].

An excellent summary of the periodical literature on projects and problems is included which will save the reader many hours of library reading. A twenty-page bibliography forms an appendix.

The book contains little that is new, except the illustrations, and little that is profound. Being largely an expansion of Mr. Stevenson's excellent journal articles on the project, and a collection and comparison of other views, it is necessarily a kind of résumé—albeit a needed résumé. The psychological and philosophical background is filled in with extracts from the writings of Dewey, Charters, and others. So numerous are the citations, in fact, that the treatise impresses one sometimes as simply a series of correlated quotations. The thinking that now needs to be done in the way of clarifying the conceptions underlying the project has again been postponed. Real thinking has been done,

<sup>1</sup> JOHN ALFORD STEVENSON, *The Project Method of Teaching*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1921. Pp. xvi+395.

however, in the direction of the application of project ideas to college teaching. The use of the project plan in courses in engineering, law, medicine, journalism, insurance salesmanship, and modern languages brings vividly before one the large changes which the project method of teaching is likely to bring about within the next few years in the professional schools.

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*A complete project curriculum.*—Despite the present extraordinary vogue of the project in all its phases, a course of study based exclusively upon the working out of a single great annual project for each grade is still sufficiently striking to command attention. To attention must be added respect when, as in this case, the program described is so far workable at least as to have afforded a fruitful year's activity for the primary grades of the model school of a state normal school, and that in face of the fact that the teachers in charge were merely students in training changing every ten weeks or oftener. This latest volume<sup>1</sup> of the "Lippincott School Project Series" is in fact a careful account of a real experiment instituted by the author in her capacity as supervisor of the three primary grades.

The avowed object of this experiment was, in accordance with the pronouncements of numerous leaders in educational thought, the "formulation of a curriculum which shall answer life's demands because it *is* life, and . . . permits the child to live in the school as naturally and as wholly as he lives out of it" (p. 1). The first step toward the attainment of this end—a sort of practice exercise preparatory to the central undertaking—was the production by the three grades in co-operation of a mammoth fair exhibit, modeled upon the state fair held in the city at the opening of the term and attended by all children as a part of their school work. On the completion of this enterprise, the children of the third grade were led by the supervisor to vote for the development along similar lines of a model city, reproducing the more prominent features of their city and of municipal organization in general. The first grade then elected to co-operate with a game of "families," involving a study of the essential features of home life in this and other lands and the construction of fully equipped and well-peopled houses for the miniature city. In the same manner, the second grade chose to "play store," building and stocking their places of business, studying commodities, production, transportation, costs, and money arithmetic; while the third grade, as the most mature element in this small community, retained responsibility for a general oversight of the whole, and in particular for the construction of the ground plan of the city, the laying out of canals, bridges, streets, pavements, public buildings, and factories, the editing of a newspaper, and the organization of duly elected departments of health, police, street-cleaning, finance, and public works, each

<sup>1</sup> MARGARET ELIZABETH WELLS, *A Project Curriculum*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1921. Pp. ix+338.